



HEALTH AFFAIRS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-1200

APR 07 2004

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6035

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter provides information requested in the House Appropriations Committee (HAC) Report 108-187 on the Department's utilization of optimization funding to support facility and equipment upgrades at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC), Bethesda National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), and the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC).

In 2003 my office became aware of questions about the referenced military treatment facilities' equipment and facility requirements, particularly concerning WRAMC. Our research found that WRAMC was not plagued by defective healthcare equipment or the lack of funding for healthcare technology. Subsequently, we asked each of the Military Medical Departments to identify funding requirements for patient care technology at the referenced military treatment facilities. They responded that there were no unfinanced priority requirements for patient care technology or service and facility upgrades at NNMC, WRAMC or LRMC. Therefore, the seventy million dollars identified in the HAC language were utilized to fund other Military Department optimization projects and critical medical needs.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you. Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William Winkenwerder, Jr.", is positioned above the printed name.

William Winkenwerder, Jr., MD

Enclosure

108TH CONGRESS
1st Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT
108-187

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2004

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

TOGETHER WITH

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

[TO ACCOMPANY H.R. 2656]



is the fifth leading cause of death by diseases in this country. The Committee recognizes that early detection, diagnosis, and treatment are essential to reversing this trend. The Committee recommends \$10,000,000 for coordinated efforts between the United States Air Force Medical Services and a rural medical Diabetes Center of Excellence to develop a model diabetes care continuum, advance treatment protocols, causal and trend analysis, and prevention programs for Type 2 diabetes.

FISCAL YEAR 2003 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION

The Committee has grave concerns that the funds appropriated in the fiscal year 2003 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (Public Law 108-11) for the Defense Health Program has not been fully released to the services. The Committee understands that the Department has released \$200,000,000 of the \$501,700,000 that was provided in this appropriation. The Committee directs the Department to release the remaining \$301,700,000 immediately to the services for costs associated with Operation Iraqi Freedom and other ongoing operations, and to report to the Committee on Appropriations once this has been completed.

MTF OPTIMIZATION

Recent military operations have heightened the Committee's concern about the conditions at military medical treatment facilities, specifically with the conditions and equipment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda Naval Hospital and Landstuhl Army Medical Center. The Committee, and ultimately the Congress, provided additional funds in both the fiscal year 2001 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (Public Law 107-20) and the fiscal year 2002 Defense Appropriations Act and Supplemental Appropriations (Public Law 107-117) to finance service and facility upgrades at military medical treatment facilities. The Committee recently learned that there was \$70,000,000 of these funds remaining for optimization. The Committee directs the Department to use this money immediately for facility and equipment upgrades at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda Naval Hospital and Landstuhl Army Medical Center. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs shall report to the Committee on Appropriations the details of the service and facility upgrades.

CHEMICAL AGENTS AND MUNITIONS DESTRUCTION, ARMY

Fiscal year 2003 appropriation	\$1,490,199,000
Fiscal year 2004 budget request	1,530,261,000
Committee recommendation	1,533,261,000
Change from budget request	+3,000,000

This appropriation funds the Chemical Agents and Munitions